

HHC, 312th MI

Headhunter Newsletter

April 8, 2004

A Note from the Commander

Hello from Camp Victory North, Baghdad, Iraq. It still is a bit unreal that we are finally here. We have all trained and prepared so long for this and now we're finally doing what we've trained for. It's not altogether that bad over here as living conditions go. Still lots of building to be done to include the Division HQ for our ACE personnel and BN TOC personnel in addition to the BN HQ for the rest of HHC. We bid a fond farewell to B CO, TUAV PLT at Camp New York, Kuwait as they continued the road march north to Taji. The living conditions in Taji are a bit more spartan, but will steadily improve over the course of the next few months. Although we are separated by half the planet, our C CO, TUAV PLT is getting the ball rolling with their training at Ft Huachuca, Arizona. We look forward to them joining the fight here with us in the future. In short, our Headquarters family is all over the darn place. What can be said is that no matter the location, our Headhunter family is setting the standard in everything they do. As the Company Commander, I could not be more proud of our soldiers. I think I can speak for all of us here when I say that we miss you all very much and are looking forward to getting the job done, wherever we are, and getting home to you.

I can't tell you how good it makes us all feel here in Iraq to know that all the hard work we put into the FRG...that YOU put into the FRG prior to deployment is paying off. As we are setting the standard here, those on the home front are setting the standard w/ the FRG. Knowing that you are taking care of each other makes being over here just a little bit easier. THANK YOU!

Thanks for your continued patience with communication with your deployed soldier. We hope to have internet access and email more readily available here in the near future. All of us, to include myself, look forward to more regular communication with friends and family. Until then, keep sending the mail! Mail call, as it was for our parents and grandparents who wore the

uniform in past conflicts, is a time that can either make or break your day. Mail from Kristen brightens up even the worst day here for me...as mail from you does for your soldier. THANKS AGAIN FOR ALL THAT YOU DO FOR OUR COUNTRY, AND OUR COMPANY! God Bless.

-Dan Bishop "HEADHUNTER 6"

Kristen's Corner

Thank you to each of the ladies that have volunteered to help with Meals on Wheels, Battalion Care Teams, and photography. I really appreciate how everyone is contributing to make this FRG a success.

One of our spouses found this incredible web site, run by the VFW. It offers phone cards to soldiers so that they can call home. If you cannot afford to buy phone cards for your soldier to call home, I recommend checking this website out. I understand the card will only give you about 10 minutes, but that is at least something. Thanks Brooke!

<http://www.operationuplink.org/>

I learned something new that I have not had a chance to confirm, but wanted to share with you on the chance that it is true. If you itemize your taxes at the end of the year, you should save your receipts from mailing packages overseas. I am told that postage cost is tax deductible.

For those of you that are interested in starting a Savings Deposit Program account, that can be done now. Go to the DIV Headquarters on the second floor to fill out paperwork, if you want to make the deposit through allotment. If you want to use cash, go to the 230th finance battalion on the corner of 761st Tank BN Ave and 62nd Street. You can deposit up to the total amount of unallotted take home pay for the previous month. Bring your LES and Power of Attorney. The interest rate is 10% with this account. A great investment.

I have told some of you that a lot of soldiers are requesting the Underarmour tshirts. They will be issued in July, so I would recommend only sending 1 or 2, for

them to get by with until then. It is already over 90 degrees, & July is a long way off. If you live on post, you can get them at clothing sales. If not, you can get them at <http://www.underarmour.com/ua2/ua/gear.asp?dept%5Fid=37>

The two styles used are style number 5039 and 5084. Cost is ~\$25 each. Brown only.

My husband has suggested sending all sizes of paint brushes. The sand is getting in everything and those would really help to get it out.

There is a rumor going around that 1CD or III Corps, will send individual care packages to soldiers through the flights that are going to Kuwait once a month. That is not exactly true. They will send donated items on those flights. So if you have 400 boot inserts that you would like to donate to 312th MI soldiers for the good of the unit, that would be eligible to fly on that monthly flight to get to the soldiers. But if Mrs. Smith wants to send two pairs of socks to Mr. Smith, that would have to be done on spouse's dime. It was a good rumor. I'll let you know if the policy changes.

Here is what I know about down range, as per my husband and CW2 Killingsworth; Not sure when the various HQs are going to be complete. The ALOC (Admin and Logistics Operations Cell) should be up within the next 2-3 weeks. The BN TOC (Tactical Operations Cell) and the ACE will continue to work at two different locations for the time being. We will slowly begin the transition away from the 1AD location and will begin to take charge at the 1st Cav Div location at Victory. The ALOC will continue to operate out of trailers until the HQ building is complete. Sections are for the most part doing Physical Training at the section level. Most are doing it early to beat the heat. Most are going to breakfast between 0600 and 0800...not sure of the lunch schedule. Most try and get to dinner prior to 1800 as you have to wear all of your battle rattle here after 1830 (until 0600 the next morning)

-Kristen Bishop (FRG Leader)

Treasury and Fundraising

Battalion will sell the **magnetic car ribbons**, personalized for 312th MI. We should have them in stock mid-April. They will have 'God Bless the 312th MI BN' on one tail and the DIV CAV and 312th MI BN patches on the other tail. They are 5 inches tall and CAV yellow. You can wait until they come in, or advance order to secure yours now.



Our **T-shirt orders** will close at the end of the month. Now is the time to order them if you want them. I will probably not order any extras, so if you want one, please let me know NLT April 30th. You can place your order through Kristen via phone or email, (254-542-4794 or

Kristen.Bishop@us.army.mil) They come in white, gray or black. All adult sizes are available. Kids t-shirts are available as well.



COMMUNITY & UNIT CALENDAR

Apr 15: 6pm FRG Meeting at Soldier and Family Readiness Center. 6-6:30 will be our meeting and **at 6:30 we will have a guest instructor teach us some self-defense techniques. An adult babysitter will be present.**

April 22: Welcome home 4ID celebration at the 4ID parade field. All schools are calling this a day off so children can go enjoy it with their parents. Beginning at 11 a.m., soldiers and their families will be treated to an all-day patriotic concert featuring internationally recognized entertainment and a free carnival. Food and soft drinks provided by generous sponsors will be offered until supplies are exhausted. Drew Carey, Charlie Veracola, & a comedy jam including Eddie Griffin and Bruce Bruce. Musical performances include Ludacris, Jessica Simpson, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Tracy Byrd, John Michael Montgomery and Jeff Bates, inspirational acts Billy Ray Cyrus and MercyMe, Rhian Benson, No Illusion and American Idol stars Kimberly Locke and RJ Helton. Wayne Newton will serve as MC for the evening entertainers, and "Lieutenant Dan" – Gary Sinise will also make an appearance. Also making appearances will be WWE Superstars including Stone Cold Steve Austin, Shawn Michaels, the Undertaker, Lita and many more. This list is just a sample of the entertainment planned, as two stages will be rocking into the night.

Special children's entertainment is planned throughout the day including appearances by SpongeBob SquarePants, Dora the Explorer, Mallory Lewis and Lambchop, Tony the Tiger, Pokey Puppy, Little Critter and the Itty Bitty Heartbeats.

April 24: 6pm. Family Fun Center evening out. The center is located on FM 440, for all interested FRG members and their families. **FRG funds will pay costs**

of one mini-golf game per person and some quarters for air hockey or video games. (This is an indoor facility, so rain or shine!)

May 5th: Cinco de Mayo dinner from 5-8pm at the Officer's Club. All you can eat taco buffet. **Adults \$5.00 and children \$3.00 (12 and under)** We'll set aside a large table. Come join us at 6pm.

May 7th: Military Spouse Appreciation Day 0730-1430. Childcare check-in begins at 7:00 a.m. at the Comanche Youth Center. Sign-in/Register for Individual Workshops: 7:30-8:30 a.m. at the Comanche Chapel. Free food, goodies, fun and door prizes. Max participation is 250 people, so call now to reserve your spot. Yvonne Poe 288-5156.

August 14: BLORA End of Summer Bash. More info to follow, just wanted to put out the date so you could plan your summer vacation schedule. If you would like to help with the planning or executing of this event, we are looking for committee members to handle Food, Entertainment, Set-up and Clean-up. Please let me know if you would like to help and I will get you in contact with the committee chair.

IRAQ MAIL:

The address for soldiers in Baghdad/Victory North (HHC) is: Rank, Last Name, First Name HHC, 312th MI BN (1st CAV DIV) APO AE 09344

The address for soldiers in the UAV platoon that are in Taji is: Rank, Last Name, First Name B Co, TUAV Platoon APO AE 09313

Please note the address change. The reason for the new address is this...the old one is also being used by 2nd Brigade (who left 2 mos before us), so when they go home a bit earlier than us next year, their mail will be forwarded back to the states. Please use the new address immediately. Mail transit time is 10-20 days. I understand that some of the soldiers in the UAV platoon will be staying in Taji and others will move to Victory. If your soldier is in Victory, please use the first address. If he/she is in Taji, use the second address.

CASUALTY NOTIFICATION

Many family members have been asking me how casualty notification works. Here is the short version. When a soldier is injured, the next of kin is notified with a phone call from our Rear-Detachment Commander, CPT Erin McIntire. If a soldier is killed, a Notification Officer & Chaplain will come to the home of the next of kin. Communications overseas are shut down until all family members are notified. I will receive word telling me that the casualties were or were not in our Battalion. If the casualties are not in our unit, I will not start the phone tree or email it out, but if you begin to worry, you can contact me to ask. If we do have a casualty, I will start the phone tree once the family is notified, so we can all rally around the family to provide support. I will not know the name of the casualty until the family is notified. **It is incredibly important that I always have a phone number AND address to reach you at. If you move or go out of town, even for a weekend, please pass on the contact information.** If you are in the local area and have not given me your care sheet information, please get that to me, I do not want to call everyone and ruin your day trying to collect the information. I need to know the following.

1. Who you want contacted in the local area and their phone number.
2. Is there anyone in the FRG that you would not want there.
3. What immediate needs would you have? Contact work? Name and number? P/U kids? Who is authorized to pick them up? Name and number?
4. Are your children registered with CYS?
5. What short term needs would you have? Meals-number of adults? P/U relatives at airport?/Child care?

US POST OFFICE

The postal service will supply everything you need to send packages to your soldier. This includes pre-addressed shipping labels, customs slips, a 600 ft. roll of tape, and boxes. All you have to do is call the 1-800 number below with the address of your soldier. Your supplies will be sent to you via mail and they will replenish your supply as needed. They offer two box sizes. The 7x7x6 is quite small. I would recommend only getting the second size, 12x12x8. When you call the number, press

the number for what language you would like to proceed in. Then do not press any number and wait for an operator to answer. Tell her you are calling for this program and she will take care of everything.
CALL 1-800-610-8734

WAYS TO HELP FROM AFAR

The Fisher House is a wonderful program that is in need. The House in Landstuhl, Germany is overwhelmed and needs our support. The Fisher House provides an extremely low-cost place for families to stay while they are visiting their injured soldiers that are in the hospital in Germany, after they are evacuated from Iraq. They provide a room to sleep in that is better than most hotels, plus they provide their guests breakfast. If you are looking for a way to help, please consider making a donation to this wonderful organization.
www.fisherhouse.org

Our Battalion FRG is setting up a fund for families that are struck by tragedy. We are going to use the money that we collect to buy restaurant gift certificates for families that suffer a loss. Please contact me if you would like more information.

CONGRATULATIONS

Please welcome the Companies newest additions. LT and Mrs. Brian Kriek are proud to announce the birth of their daughter Madison. She was born Friday, April 2nd. She weighed 7 pounds 1 ounce and was 20 and 3/4 inches long.

PHANTOM DISTRO INFORMATION **TAKS Testing is April 27,28 and 29.**

This is the mandatory Texas test that children must pass to move on to the next grade.

Introduction to computers Class.

Offered 29March thru 1April from 4:45 - 9:45. It is completely free and held at the Soldier Development Center. Please call Elaine or Geri to register 532-1505.

School Age Children. Please make sure to update your emergency contact list at your child's school. It is highly recommended that you add a neighbor/friend to allow your children to be picked up by them. If you can afford it, give them an extra car seat for your child in the event of an

emergency. There have been some recent instances, where parents and other contacts were not able to be found at all and the children really suffered. Fort Hood is asking that all parents Pre-Register their children with Child and Youth Services. Pre-Registration is free and a good thing to have in an emergency. Last week, a mother was in a car accident. The children were taken to foster care immediately. It would be much better to have the children registered so that CYS can step in to care for your children in a loving home within the Army Family.

The Fort Hood Tax Center will be open until 26 May. Hours of operation are Tues-Sat from 10-6pm. The FHTC will be closed federal holidays, and training holidays. The FHTC provides assistance on a walk-in basis and is co-located with the Clear Creek Commissary. These services are free to all active duty military, family members, and retirees.

Fort Hood Taxi/Shuttle Service:

As of 1 Apr, the Military taxi service is restricted to main post areas only. The Military Taxi Service on main post can be obtained by calling 287-2154. The On Post Shuttle Service will continue to operate normally on Main Post, and to the housing area Community Life buildings. Information on the three shuttle routes is available by calling or on the DOL, Transportation website
<http://www.hood.army.mil/doltransportation/home.html>

HEALTH CONSUMER COUNCIL

If you are leaving Fort Hood for more than 30 days, you MUST transfer your TRICARE enrollment to the new region if there is TRICARE Prime available in that region. In addition to transferring enrollment, you MUST call the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System Support Office, (800) 538-9552, to change your enrollment. If DEERS does not have your correct address, the TRICARE **contractor could deny healthcare or prescription medication** claim costs. Regions require two weeks for coverage to be effective after the new enrollment. During that time, you are still covered by Region 6 but will need to call your **toll free number (1-800-406-2832) to receive an authorization for care.** If you move to a location where no TRICARE Prime is

available, you need to dis-enroll and provide TRICARE with your new address. You are then covered by TRICARE Standard, which will include a deductible and co-payment fees when receiving healthcare at a facility other than a Military Treatment Facility. For more information, visit the TRICARE Service Center, building 36023, across from Darnall's parking lot. Hours are 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday.

FRG Meeting Information

We had a problem at the March FRG meeting that I was not made aware of until the meeting was over. The sitters I hired

had difficulty keeping the kids under control. If we cannot fix this problem then we will not be allowed to use the child portion of the building at the Readiness Center. I have found another FRG that is having the same problem and would like to work with us to fix it. Here is the plan, first of all, parents please try to talk to your children before the meeting to refresh their memories that they must behave. (No running and no yelling and listen to the adult in charge) Second, **we need to trade adult sitters for the meetings**. The first meeting we will have to cover will be held on April 20th. The FRG we will babysit for will cover our meeting on the 15th. I would

like to get a few volunteers that are willing to do this service. I think we need to have 2-3 adults there to do the job. So, if we can get at least 10 volunteers, we will only get a turn once every 3 months or so. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE volunteer to help with this if you can. So far I have 3 volunteers.

NEWSLETTER

Have something to add to the newsletter?

Please contact me by May 1st

POC: Kristen Bishop, 254-542-4794

Email: kristen.bishop@us.army.mil